REMARKS

Claims 21-23, 26-28, 30-35, 76-78, 81, 82 and 84-89 are currently pending.

A. Clarke

Claims 21-22, 28, 33-34, 76-77, 82, and 87-88 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e) or 103(a) over U.S. Publication No. 2003/0026754 ("Clarke"). Applicants respectfully traverse.

As an initial matter, Clarke does not teach the step of milling carbon fibrils as recited in Applicants' claims. Clarke only teaches mechanical agitation or blending – this is not milling, which requires a milling machine.

Additionally, Clarke's solution is not an "electroconductive ink having a viscosity from about 1 to about 50,000 cps and a thixotropic index value from about 1.0 to about 10." Clarke specifically teaches to mix carbon nanotubes with dispersal agents such as detergents in order to separate "the individual SWCNT structures from the bundles in which they were formed" and "maintain the now discretely separated, individual SWCNT structures in the form of an aqueous dispersion or colloidal solution." Par. [0032]. *See also* Pars. [0025, 0027]. In other words, the "central aim" of Clarke's invention is to "ensure that SWCNT's are dispersed in an aqueous solution in the form of individual, discrete nanotubes (i.e., a complete dispersion)." Par. [0035]. Clarke further teaches that after filtering, his liquid solution "essentially does not flock or aggregate over time and remains stable (i.e., no flocking) for extended periods of time." Par. [0035]. As such, Clarke's solution is very liquid-like (as opposed to ink-like) and does not have the thick rhealogical characteristics recited in Applicants' claims (*i.e*, do not have the recited viscosity and thixotropic index values). Thus, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

B. Shibuta in view of Clarke

Claims 21-23, 26-28, 30-35, 76-78, 81-82 and 84-89 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,853,877 ("Shibuta") in view of Clarke. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Like Clarke, Shibuta's coating/film does not have the thick rheological characteristics recited in Applicants' claims (*i.e*, do not have the recited viscosity and thixotropic index values). Shibuta teaches to chemically treat carbon nanotubes "with a particular solution comprising a strong acid containing sulfur in addition to an oxidizing agent. Hollow carbon microfibers are disentangled and homogenously dispersed in a polar solution." Col. 4, lines 32-35. *See also*, Col. 5, lines 41-47. In other words, like Clarke, Shibuta is directed to forming solutions of discrete, disentangled individual carbon nanotubes. And thus, Shibuta's solution also does not have the rheological characteristics recited in Applicants' claims (*i.e*, do not have the recited viscosity and thixotropic index values). Thus, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

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As such, Applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of pending claims 21-23, 26-28, 30-35, 76-78, 81, 82 and 84-89 is allowable over the combinations of the cited references and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

No fees are believed due in connection with this filing. However, if any additional fees are necessary, the Director is hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account No. 50-0540.

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Respectfully submitted,

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